




Speech By
Dale Last

MEMBER FOR BURDEKIN

Record of Proceedings, 11 May 2023

MOTION

Far North Queensland, Service Delivery

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (3.51 pm): I rise to support the motion as moved by the member for Kawana. ‘Do our lives not matter?’ Those five words are the reason I am standing here today—to say ‘yes’ to Larissa, a 24-year-old victim of crime from this community. Yes, her life matters. Yes, I will be her voice in this parliament in Cairns because the three local members, as we have seen, are clearly mute when it comes to talking about youth crime in this city.

Mr Harper: Garbage.

Mr LAST: I take that interjection. They claim that that is garbage. Well, go and read page 3 of the local paper today—the *Cairns Post*. Go and read page 3 of the *Cairns Post* and see what the local residents have had to say about the biggest issue facing this community—youth crime. Those opposite will not talk about it. These people want hope. They want to know that this government has got their back and this government has some answers for them. If they do not believe me, go to the gallery, because I know there are victims of crime sitting in that gallery right now. They will tell you what it means to be a member of this community and to have their house broken into and their car stolen.

The fact that these three local members could not be bothered to turn up this week and talk about youth crime is a disgrace. We just heard from the member for Barron River, followed by the member for Cairns. They had their opportunity right now to talk about youth crime and they still could not bring themselves to talk about the biggest issue facing this community.

There was a rally against crime outside yesterday. We heard their stories, we heard their anger, we heard their frustration and we heard their demands for something to be done. Where were the Labor members while that rally was going on? Not one of them bothered to take the time to turn up—no Premier, no minister—could not be bothered to turn up to the crime rally out here and give these people some hope. They ought to hang their heads in shame.

We heard from the member for Clayfield about some of the figures, and they are horrendous. The people of Cairns know what those figures are about: they are living it. We know unlawful entry and unlawful use offences have doubled in this community since this government came to power. You would think that these local members would be using this opportunity, using the Cairns regional sittings, to show this community that they care, that they have their finger on the pulse, to talk about the single biggest issue impacting on their community. We have been waiting for it all week, and what have we heard? Absolutely nothing. Absolutely nothing!

Just when we thought it could not get any worse, we find out today that the Premier is sending the member for Cairns to Hong Kong. I say this: make it a one-way ticket because Cairns deserves better. Cairns deserves someone who is going to represent them. The member for Cairns stands up and continually refuses to talk about this issue.

I cannot wait to hear the contribution from the member for Cook, who moved her office out of Mareeba down here to Cairns—abandoned that community. Go to Mareeba if you do not believe me and have a look at what is happening up in Mareeba at the moment. Have a look at how that community has been torn apart. I know there is a Mareeba resident in the gallery, right up there with his hand up. He will tell you what is going on in Mareeba. What do they call the member for Barron River? He is 'The Phantom' because he can never be found when they need him. In their time of need, where is he? He cannot be found.

Those three members have spoken about the victims of youth crime crisis in parliament once—between the three of them. Think about that—the biggest issue in this community and the best they could do is talk about it once between them. It is high time that these three local members in Cairns spoke up for their constituents. We will hear from the member for Cook in a minute. Let's see if the member for Cook talks about youth crime and the impact it is having on this community and the impact it is having on her electorate, in places like Mareeba. I continually get calls about it. These members have put crime in the too-hard basket. They have given up, but I can tell the Cairns community that the LNP opposition will not give up and we will back them.

(Time expired)